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INGALLS IN THE BEGINNING OF HIS LAST SESSION OF CONGRESS.

The capital of the United States of America, Washington, D. C., has a quite peculiar system of government, and it was discussed at some length in the United States Senate on the 6th inst. by reason of Senator Ingalls, chairman of the District of Columbia, having introduced into the Senate a joint resolution which had to do with its board of commissioners.

Senator Voorhees, in the course of his remarks upon this matter, declared:

I undertake to say that there is not so anomalous a spectacle amongst the nations of the earth at this time as the city government of Washington city.

We are a republic, at least so called, and the people govern, or at least they are supposed to govern, everywhere in the United States except in the capital of this free government. Here the people can not be trusted, for reasons that I will not dwell on at this time. But I confess that I am tired of a military detail sharing in the government of the capital of the freest nation in the world.

The Indiana Senator further explains the mixed civil-military state of affairs that obtain there in the following talk:

A one-third power in the government of Washington city is a military detail from the army of the United States. The government itself is a sort of receivership to take charge of the affairs of the capital, its franchises, the rights of the people, taxation, questions of improvement and the like.

Now how a military officer of the mighty rank of captain becomes educated for the administration of a great city like this is past my comprehension. I would like to see some other plan tried for the completion and rounding out of this receivership besides going to young army officers. The army officers who are subject to this detail have never read law; they know no law except the rules that govern them in the army; they have never mixed with the people; so they know not what the people may desire. They have no popular instincts; they have no habits that have ever caused them to be informed as to the management of a municipality, either a state, a county, a township or a road district. Their business is not in the line of civil life, and this whole system to my mind is a burlesque on common sense, and it ought to be stopped at the earliest practicable moment.

This eminent publicist thus further speaks:

I protest against placing one-third of the power to govern this city in the hands of incompetent persons—persons not educated, not experienced in civil government at all, who carry into that office down here at the foot of the hill simply their arbitrary and sometimes insolent methods of disposing of business that comes before them. I would rather have men who, like some of the rest of us, have had to mix with the people, to rub up against them, mingle with them and learn their wants some place outside of a camp or an office in the war department.

"Our only Ingalls" followed the "tall Sycamore of the Wabash" in the following language:

I have been somewhat familiar with the condition of affairs here for many years, having been a member of this committee for ten or twelve years and its chairman for at least half that number of years, and I will say that the government of this district is an absolute despotism. It is an anomaly in municipal government. This is the only

place on this continent, at least under the American flag, where the people have no voice whatever in the administration of their own local affairs. They have nothing to say about the imposition of taxes; they have no voice in the selection of those who are to be placed over them for the administration of the functions of government, and it is not wholly to the praise of republican institutions that it is the best governed city there is in the United States of America.

This gaudy Senator, who dazzles somewhat superficial observers with his glittering generalities, whose touchstone of true government, lies in his most highly cherished solecism, "Politics is the metaphysics of force," thus continues to defend his "absolute despotism."

There is no community of a similar number of men, women and children where the conditions of human happiness are so abundant as they are here, and there is no similar community within my knowledge where the conditions of prosperity are more stable and permanent; and it is no exaggeration to say that whatever may have been the local difficulties, whatever may have been the disturbances and the friction that have arisen from time to time, there is no municipal community on this continent that is as well governed and as cheaply governed as the city of Washington.

I submit that the government of this District is not open to obnoxious criticisms when compared with the governments of cities like Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis and San Francisco. It will bear inspection and comparison with them all.

Do Kansas farmers, Kansas mechanics, Kansas toilers generally among the common, sturdy, God-fearing, men-loving, plain people, feel to commend with the most copious profusion the foregoing plea in behalf of autocratic class government, so glibly proclaimed by this gifted Senator of supreme, superhuman, attainments?

They might turn from this enthusiastic outburst of majestic eloquence in behalf of "popular institutions" (?) and notice the following from Hon. Henry W. Blair, the senior Senator from New Hampshire, "the old Granite State":

I do not coincide with the remarks of the distinguished chairman of the committee on the District of Columbia in his statement with reference to the government of this District. I believe it to be as he states it to be, a despotism. I believe it to be a corroding canker at the heart of the institutions of the United States. I believe it to be an instrumentality which, unless reversed and extirpated from the body-politic, will ultimately lead the way to disasters and troubles in our government not different from those which resulted to the government of France from the nature of Parisian society.

I do not believe this to be a well governed city. There may be peace here as there is in Warsaw, but the people of the District of Columbia desire the privilege of freemen, and if you put the question to a vote to-day in the District of Columbia nine-tenths of the people who live within its borders would vote for a popular form of government. They are republicans in the large, broad sense which includes democracy, and they desire liberal institutions. They desire here at the center, at the heart of this great commonwealth, there should be an illustration of their existence and of their practical workings. They believe that the city of Washington should be a model republic,

subject only to those limitations which attach to the great exterior regulations of the commonwealth at large.

Could there have been a more manly, sturdy rebuke of the mouthings of this senior Senator from Kansas than the following from Senator Blair:

These freemen desire representation. They desire it upon the floors of both Houses of Congress; they desire representation in this Senate and they ought to have it. They ought to have a vote in the Senate. They desire representation in the other House and they would have it to-day if they had the rights of American freemen or freemen of any description whatever. The Senator from Kansas, in his eulogium upon despotism as illustrated here, does not voice the principles of the American constitution of American freedom or the desires of the American people who reside within the limits of the District of Columbia.

I have some knowledge in regard to this matter as well as the Senator, and I join issue with him on the assertion that the people here desire the form of government under which they live, which is, as the Senator from Kansas says, like the government of Warsaw, a despotism in the very soul of American institutions.

Hon. Joseph N. Dolph, the studious Senator from far-off Oregon, followed Senator Blair in these words:

Mr. President, I agree with the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. Blair) in regard to the character of the government of the city of Washington, and I do not think it is any reason for the continuation of the present government to say that it has succeeded in maintaining order and protecting life and property. It is against the spirit of our institutions; it is not democratic; it is un-republican, and it is an anomaly.

The general worthlessness, practically speaking, of almost eighteen consecutive years of Senatorial service is thus most freely stated by Senator Dolph in the following criticism of the system:

But that was not what I rose to talk about. If the business of the board of commissioners of the district is transacted as suggested by the Senator from Kansas, that is a greater anomaly than even the government of this district. I never heard of such a thing as a board possessing such powers as the commissioners of the district have; being in session or not in session at the disposition of one or two of them every day in the year.

The criticism I had to make upon the joint resolution offered by the Senator from Kansas, was that so far as anything upon the face of it appears, it would be competent for two of these commissioners at any time to get together and transact important business without notification to the other commissioner, that they were about to assemble and act as a board, and it would seem to be authority for any two to hold a board meeting at any time without notification to the third. So I propose to insert after the words "acting as a board" the provision "that it shall be at a stated meeting or at any special meeting of which all were notified."

Senator John H. Reagan, of Texas, held up to view, Senator Ingalls' deliberate statement, "There is no municipal community on this continent that is as cheaply governed as the city of Washington;" by presenting the following figures which he had gathered from the appropriation bills in behalf of the district:

The regular annual estimate for appro-

priations for the district of Columbia for the fiscal year 1891 was \$5,380,114.27. The annual estimate for the year 1892 is \$5,450,215.17. The regular annual appropriations for 1891 amounted to \$5,769,544.15. In addition to the regular annual appropriations made for that year, we appropriated for Rock Creek park \$1,200,000 during the last session, and we appropriated for a bathing beach \$3,000, and for zoological garden \$92,000, making the appropriations for this district during the last session and for the present fiscal year \$7,064,544.15—about as much, I believe, as it costs to carry on the state government of the great state of New York, with its 6,000,000 inhabitants; twice as much; yes, more than it takes to pay the whole expenses of the great state of Texas, with its two and a half millions of population, including its expenditure for education and other purposes.

I am sure the Senator did not think of these things or he would not have said this was the cheapest governed city in the country. It has occurred to me frequently that the enormous expense for this less than 300,000 people deserves a scrutinizing investigation by a committee. Something ought to be done to reduce these appropriations. I may agree with the Senator from Kansas that there are more of the means of human comfort in this city than in any other place in the United States. That is easily accounted for by the fact that weekly, millions of dollars are paid out to be distributed among the people.

Senator Reagan, in the following recital, gave our Mr. Ingalls a fresh exhibition of his own general dullness as to any actual comprehension of how little labor really has its own:

Why, Mr. President, the man who travels through the rural parts of this country anywhere and sees the population that labor in the fields and in the shops, and sees their condition and then compares it with the most humble part of the population in this city will find that here even the freedmen are infinitely better dressed than the laboring population in the rural parts of any portion of these United States. It comes from the fact of the pouring out of millions of dollars a month here, where a little labor commands high wages, and that accounts for the fact that we have a population crowding in here after employment and offices beyond the capacity of the government to give employment to and beyond the means of furnishing pay.

Men and brethren, women and sisters, who have made Kansas the home of your adoption,—those of you who have not been born upon its sacred soil—where can be the possible gratification in the thought that Kansas would continue for six years more a patrician in the United States Senate? A man who is not to the manor born, but who is well fitted to be the most abject tool of a soulless oligarchy. But happily Kansas freemen settled this matter on November 4, 1890.

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